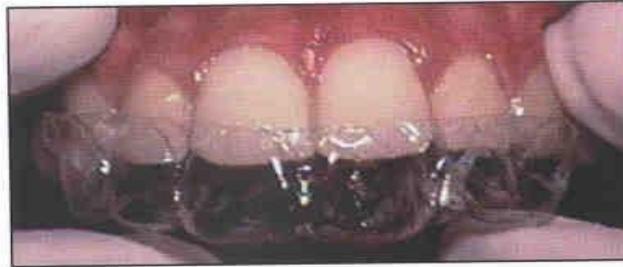


# VIRTUOSUM

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## Retention



### What is Retention?

**Congratulations!** Your braces have now been removed and you are beginning the retention phase of your treatment. Please remember that this stage of your orthodontic treatment is just as important as the braces phase in determining the ultimate success of your treatment.

Teeth move continuously throughout our life and will always want to go back to where they started. In order to stabilise and maintain the position of the teeth attained during orthodontic treatment it is necessary to retain the teeth.

A customised retention plan is tailored to each patient. Eventually, the retainers will only need to be worn one night per week. During this period, appointments are scheduled with decreasing frequency.

Now that your braces have been removed, it is important to see your Dentist for a good scale and clean of your teeth. Do not forget to continue your six monthly check-ups with your Dentist to maintain healthy gums and teeth!

Stop! If you play sport, you will need to visit your Dentist to have a mouthguard made to protect your beautiful teeth.

## How Will I Stop My Teeth From Moving?

This will require the wearing of retainers on both your upper and lower teeth for several years. In fact, your teeth will always change and move slightly over time, so the longer and more frequently you wear your retainers, the greater the likelihood that your orthodontic result will be maintained.

## What Are Retainers?

There are many types of retainers. Some removable and some fixed in place. At the end of your active treatment, Dr O'Callaghan will select the retainer that will work best for you.

## How Often Should I Wear My Retainer?

The final observation and retention period of treatment normally spans approximately one year. Each person's requirements are different and a customised retention plan will be developed for you. As retention continues, the removable retainers are progressively worn less.

- **Each** person has different requirements for retainer wear. Retainers **must** be worn during the times specified by Dr O'Callaghan.
- **Do not** wear your retainers while eating main meals, drinking hot drinks, cleaning your teeth and during involvement in contact sports or swimming.
- **If you are playing** contact sports, then a mouthguard made by your Dentist should be worn at all times!
- **When your retainers** are not in your mouth, they **must be kept** in their case!
- **Remember** to bring your retainer to each orthodontic appointment.
- **Please ensure** that the plaster models that have been given to you following the removal of your braces are kept in a safe storage place, as further retainers can be made from these plaster models.

## How Do I Care For My Retainer?

- **Keeping** the retainers in your mouth or in their case will avoid loss or breakage, which leads to extra expense.
- **Ensure** you clean your retainers when you clean teeth. Brush the retainers with your toothbrush, toothpaste and always use **cold water**. Alternatively, a denture cleaner and **cold water** may also be used to clean your retainer. Placing your retainer in straight **white** vinegar can also remove any stains and smells. Place in **white** vinegar for approximately 15 mins then rinse with cold water and clean with your toothbrush.
- **Never** place your retainer under hot water or use chemicals to clean it, as this will distort your retainer and a new one may be required.
- **Avoid** leaving your retainer where it may be accessible to pets as they find them quite tasty!
- **Never** place your retainer in tissues or in your pockets as they are easily lost or broken and they are very expensive to replace!

## What If My Retainers Feel Tight?

It is important to remember that if the retainers feel tight when they are placed in the mouth, after a period of not wearing them, this means that your teeth have moved and you must be very diligent in wearing the retainers until the tightness subsides.

If you have any further questions regarding this tightness sensation, please speak with Dr O'Callaghan at your next scheduled retention visit.

## What If My Retainers Become Lost Or Broken?

- **It is important** to make an appointment with Dr O'Callaghan if your retainer becomes loose, tight, lost or broken.
- Although there will be a charge for any repair or replacement of your retainer, it is a relatively inexpensive way to protect the investment you have made in your orthodontic care.

### **A Note About Final Records**

- A set of X-rays, photographs and models of your teeth will be taken on your next appointment following the removal of your braces.
- These records will be used to evaluate your treatment, plan the retention period and determine space for your wisdom teeth. There will be no charge for these records, they are an extremely important reference to your orthodontic result.

### **Wisdom Teeth**

- During the retention period, the question of wisdom teeth will be addressed. This is normally about the end of year 11 or year 12. If the wisdom teeth do not have enough space to erupt comfortably into the mouth, their removal will be indicated.
- Wisdom teeth may cause gum damage to the 12 year old molar teeth. They are also associated with crowding of the remaining front teeth.